

Chem-Bio News

1. ISRAEL - BARAK ORDERS FILTERS FOR NEW SECURE ROOMS: *"Worried about a non-conventional attack against Israel, Defense Minister Ehud Barak has approved a new plan under which all "secure rooms" built after 2009 will need to be fitted with chemical and biological filters."*

2. FEDS WORK TO SECURE POTENTIAL 'DIRTY BOMB' SOURCE: *"A new government program aims to make it more difficult for terrorists to steal dangerous radioactive material from the nation's hospitals and medical research labs to make "dirty bombs."*

3. INDIA - 111-YEAR-OLD EPIDEMIC ACT SET FOR BURIAL: *"The 111-year-old Epidemic Act will soon be replaced by a stringent new law that the government claims will be able to effectively fight epidemics and new age diseases like HIV/AIDS, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and bio-terrorism by punishing those whose negligence leads to an epidemic."*

4. ASSASSINATION HINDERS IAEA INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED SYRIAN REACTOR: *"Efforts to investigate alleged Syrian nuclear-weapon activities have been slowed by the recent killing of an intermediary working with international inspectors, the top U.N. nuclear official revealed today."*

5. COMPOUND COULD HELP DETECT CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS AT LONG DISTANCES: *"A light-transmitting compound that could one day be used in high-efficiency fiber optics and in sensors to detect biological and chemical weapons at long distance almost went undiscovered by scientists because its structure was too difficult to examine."*

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1. COURT RULES IN ARMY'S FAVOR IN THE NEWPORT HYDROLYSATE SHIPMENTS CASE: *"A U.S. District Court Judge ruled Monday in favor of the Army and dismissed on all counts a case seeking to halt shipments of caustic waste water created by the destruction of the nerve agent VX at an Army plant in Indiana to a treatment facility in Texas."*

2. UMATILLA DEPOT BEGINS FINAL VX-FILLED MUNITIONS DISPOSAL CAMPAIGN: *"Umatilla Chemical Depot storage workers began delivering VX-filled land mines to the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) this morning. This marks the official start of the last of six individual VX munitions disposal campaigns at the depot."*

CB Daily Report

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ISRAEL - BARAK ORDERS FILTERS FOR NEW SECURE ROOMS

By Yaakov Katz
The Jerusalem Post
September 25, 2008

"Worried about a non-conventional attack against Israel, Defense Minister Ehud Barak has approved a new plan under which all "secure rooms" built after 2009 will need to be fitted with chemical and biological filters.

The Defense Ministry said it would not be able to demand by law that filters be installed in secure rooms which had already been built.

"All secure rooms have a metal tube opening to outside, and that is where the filter can be installed, at a low price of around \$1,000," one official explained. "We cannot force those people to buy the filter, and the new directive will only pertain to new homes and apartments."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1222017397242&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FPrinter>

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FEDS WORK TO SECURE POTENTIAL 'DIRTY BOMB' SOURCE

By Mimi Hall
USA Today
September 24, 2008

"A new government program aims to make it more difficult for terrorists to steal dangerous radioactive material from the nation's hospitals and medical research labs to make "dirty bombs."

About 1,300 machines in medical facilities will be fitted with new security measures by the end of next year that will make it much harder for anyone to steal the cesium chloride inside, officials at the Homeland Security and Energy departments said. The machines use the material to irradiate blood, primarily for cancer patients.

The cesium contained in just one machine would be enough for a terrorist to make a radioactive bomb, said Vayl Oxford, head of Homeland Security's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office. The new program "takes a potential threat off the table," he said.

Although there is no immediate or credible threat, government security officials have long been concerned that terrorists will set off "dirty bombs" in the nation's cities. A dirty bomb would not kill many people, but it would wreak havoc and contaminate streets and buildings."

The full article can be found at: http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2008-09-23-mednukes_N.htm

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INDIA - 111-YEAR-OLD EPIDEMIC ACT SET FOR BURIAL

Indo-Asian News Service

September 25, 2008

"The 111-year-old Epidemic Act will soon be replaced by a stringent new law that the government claims will be able to effectively fight epidemics and new age diseases like HIV/AIDS, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and bio-terrorism by punishing those whose negligence leads to an epidemic.

"The Epidemic Diseases Act of 1897 will be repealed as it is not capable of handling new epidemic threats. Newer diseases like HIV/AIDS and SARS have emerged as major public health challenges," said a senior health ministry official.

"The threat of bio-terrorism and disaster-related health problems can be addressed in a better way through the new act. The British era act will be replaced by new legislation called the Public Health Act," the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told IANS."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.freshnews.in/111-year-old-epidemic-act-set-for-burial-75823>

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ASSASSINATION HINDERS IAEA INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED SYRIAN REACTOR

By Greg Webb

Global Security Newswire

September 26, 2008

"Efforts to investigate alleged Syrian nuclear-weapon activities have been slowed by the recent killing of an intermediary working with international inspectors, the top U.N. nuclear official revealed today (see GSN, Sept. 23).

The announcement came in the final seconds of this week's meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency's 35-nation governing board, which had just completed a debate over the agency's investigation into a Syrian facility that U.S. officials alleged to be a nuclear reactor that was destroyed in a Sept. 6, 2007, Israeli air strike. U.S. intelligence officials later offered evidence that the site near al-Kibar was a nearly operational plutonium production reactor intended to fuel a nuclear-weapon program (see GSN, April 25)."

"The Syrian official was Brig. Gen. Mohammad Suleiman, a Western diplomat confirmed today. Suleiman was shot in the head at his seaside villa on Aug. 2 by a sniper positioned on an offshore boat, Reuters reported last month."

The full article can be found at: http://www.nti.org/d_newswire/issues/2008_9_25.html

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COMPOUND COULD HELP DETECT CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS AT LONG DISTANCES

ScienceDaily

September 28, 2008

"A light-transmitting compound that could one day be used in high-efficiency fiber optics and in sensors to detect biological and chemical weapons at long distance almost went undiscovered by scientists because its structure was too difficult to examine.

Luckily, scientists from U.S. Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory and Northwestern University were able to determine the structure of the compound using the uniquely suited Chemistry and Materials beamline of the Center for Advanced Radiation Sources (ChemMatCARS) at the Advanced Photon Source.

"Like other such materials, this material has an electrically polarized structure. The incident light interacts with the electron cloud and in the process is disturbed," Argonne scientist Mercuri Kanatzidis said. "The disturbance changes the wavelength of the emitted light and creates two beams: the original and the second harmonic — a beam with half the wavelength and double the frequency."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/09/080926120531.htm>

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COURT RULES IN ARMY'S FAVOR IN THE NEWPORT HYDROLYSATE SHIPMENTS CASE

US Army Chemical Materials Agency News Release

September 29, 2008

"A U.S. District Court Judge ruled Monday in favor of the Army and dismissed on all counts a case seeking to halt shipments of caustic waste water created by the destruction of the nerve agent VX at an Army plant in Indiana to a treatment facility in Texas.

The ruling issued by Chief Judge Larry J. McKinney of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana in Indianapolis, was in favor of the Army and granted the Army's motion for summary judgment. This ruling confirmed the Army's position that the

litigation, initiated by a collection of plaintiffs on May 8, 2007, raised no genuine issues to be tried. This followed an earlier court decision that denied a motion for a preliminary injunction to halt ongoing shipments of the waste water in an August 3, 2007 ruling."

"Judge McKinney's ruling confirms, once again, that safety is and remains the cornerstone of the Army's chemical weapons disposal program," said Conrad F. Whyne, director of the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency. "This ruling and summary judgment should demonstrate that the Army and its many partners in this program — Parsons, Veolia Environmental Services and Tri-State Motor Transit — conduct the program with every attention paid to safeguarding our workers, our communities and our environment."

Judge McKinney ruled in the Army's favor on all counts.

The court ruled that the caustic waste water, known as hydrolysate, is a hazardous waste, not a munition or chemical agent, and that the Army adequately considered the other risks inherent in the transportation of the wastes to Texas for ultimate disposal. "Judge McKinney's ruling validates what we have said all along, that this was our best disposal option for the Newport hydrolysate and that the disposal option was safe," said Col. Robert B. Billington, Program Manager for Chemical Stockpile Elimination at CMA.

"The court's ruling shows, beyond a doubt, that our collective efforts take seriously our mission to destroy this material in a safe manner that protects all," Whyne continued.

"When the facts are presented as they were in Judge McKinney's court room last July, it becomes readily evident that the Army has dedicated the resources, time and personnel required to accomplish our mission safely.

"This ruling dispels claims to the contrary and once again shows that the Army is engaged in our national imperative to eliminate our stockpile while balancing many intricate issues, of which safety is key and will never be compromised."

CMA began shipping the Newport hydrolysate to Veolia Environmental Services in Port Arthur, Texas in April 2007. In June, the Army voluntarily stopped shipments pending the July hearing in Judge McKinney's court. Judge McKinney first ruled against the plaintiffs in August and the Army resumed hydrolysate shipments shortly thereafter. Shipments have been ongoing ever since and have been done without incident. CMA eliminated the Newport stockpile on August 8, 2008 and is currently in the process of cleaning the disposal facility and dismantling it. Once closed, the facility and the Newport Chemical Depot will be closed under the federal Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process.

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cma.army.mil/>

The full US District Court Summary Judgment Ruling can be found at: <http://www.cma.army.mil/include/docrendition.asp?DocID=003678940>

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"Umatilla Chemical Depot storage workers began delivering VX-filled land mines to the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) this morning. This marks the official start of the last of six individual VX munitions disposal campaigns at the depot. The first of the land mines is planned to be destroyed at the UMCDF later today.

"We've safely and securely moved 5,876 loads of chemical weapons from storage to the disposal plant since we started doing so in 2004, and without accident or incident," said Lt. Col. Bob Stein, depot commander. "I thank a great team of dedicated workers for our mission success so far."

"This marks the beginning of the end of VX-filled munitions at the depot," said Mike Strong, the Army's site project manager at Umatilla. "We look forward to the time when Oregon's stockpile no longer contains any VX nerve agent."

The land mines and other munitions are transported from storage to the disposal plant in enhanced on-site containers (EONCs). The containers are designed to resist impacts, punctures, crushing and fire.

The VX land mines campaign is the 12th individual munitions disposal campaign for the depot and disposal plant. It is expected to take about two months to destroy the land mines. A total of 13 individual disposal campaigns will be required to completely eliminate the Oregon stockpile.

The UMCDF destroyed the last of 3,752 VX-filled 8-inch diameter artillery projectiles or "shells" on August 7. Since that time, the munitions disposal equipment and procedures in the plant were reconfigured to handle the VX land mines in what is called a "changeover" process.

When the VX land mines are gone, there will be no more nerve agent of any type in the Oregon stockpile, which originally contained both VX and GB (sarin) filled munitions. The only remaining chemical munitions in Oregon will then be bulk containers or "ton containers" of HD mustard blister agent. Mustard agent disposal will be the 13th and final disposal campaign at Umatilla.

When the VX nerve agent is gone, the changeover of equipment and procedures from VX land mines to mustard-filled ton containers processing is expected to take about five months. Mustard agent destruction is expected to take one to two years to complete if there are no significant delays.

The first chemical munitions disposal campaign in Oregon began on Sept. 7, 2004, with the first shipment of GB-filled rockets. Since that time, the following 11 chemical munitions disposal campaigns have been successfully and safely completed:

- 4 GB (sarin-filled) bulk containers or "ton containers" completed Jan. 5, 2006. (This was a Non-Stockpile Chemical Materiel Project (NSCMP) mission.)
- 27 GB 500-pound bombs completed May 18, 2006.

- 2,418 GB 750-pound bombs completed June 9, 2006.
- 91,442 GB rockets and warheads completed Aug. 9, 2006.
- 14,246 GB 8-inch diameter artillery projectiles completed Jan. 3, 2007.
- 47,406 GB 155mm diameter artillery projectiles completed July 8, 2007.

One VX bulk container or "ton container" completed Nov. 26, 2007. (This was a Non-Stockpile Chemical Materiel Project (NSCMP) mission.)

- 156 VX aircraft-mounted spray tanks completed Dec. 24, 2007.
- 14,519 VX rockets and warheads completed Jan. 23, 2008.
- 32,313 VX 155mm projectiles completed June 27, 2008.
- 3,752 VX 8-inch projectiles completed August 6, 2008.

Some of the disposal campaigns ran simultaneously. The disposal plant has multiple processing lines and is capable of safely disposing of different types of munitions at the same time.

When the Umatilla chemical munitions destruction mission is complete, the disposal plant will be thoroughly cleaned and disassembled according to environmental permits. The Umatilla Chemical Depot is slated for closure per the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) law. Chemical munitions have been safely and securely stored at the depot since the 1960s. The depot opened in 1941.

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cma.army.mil/fndocumentviewer.aspx?docid=003678980>

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